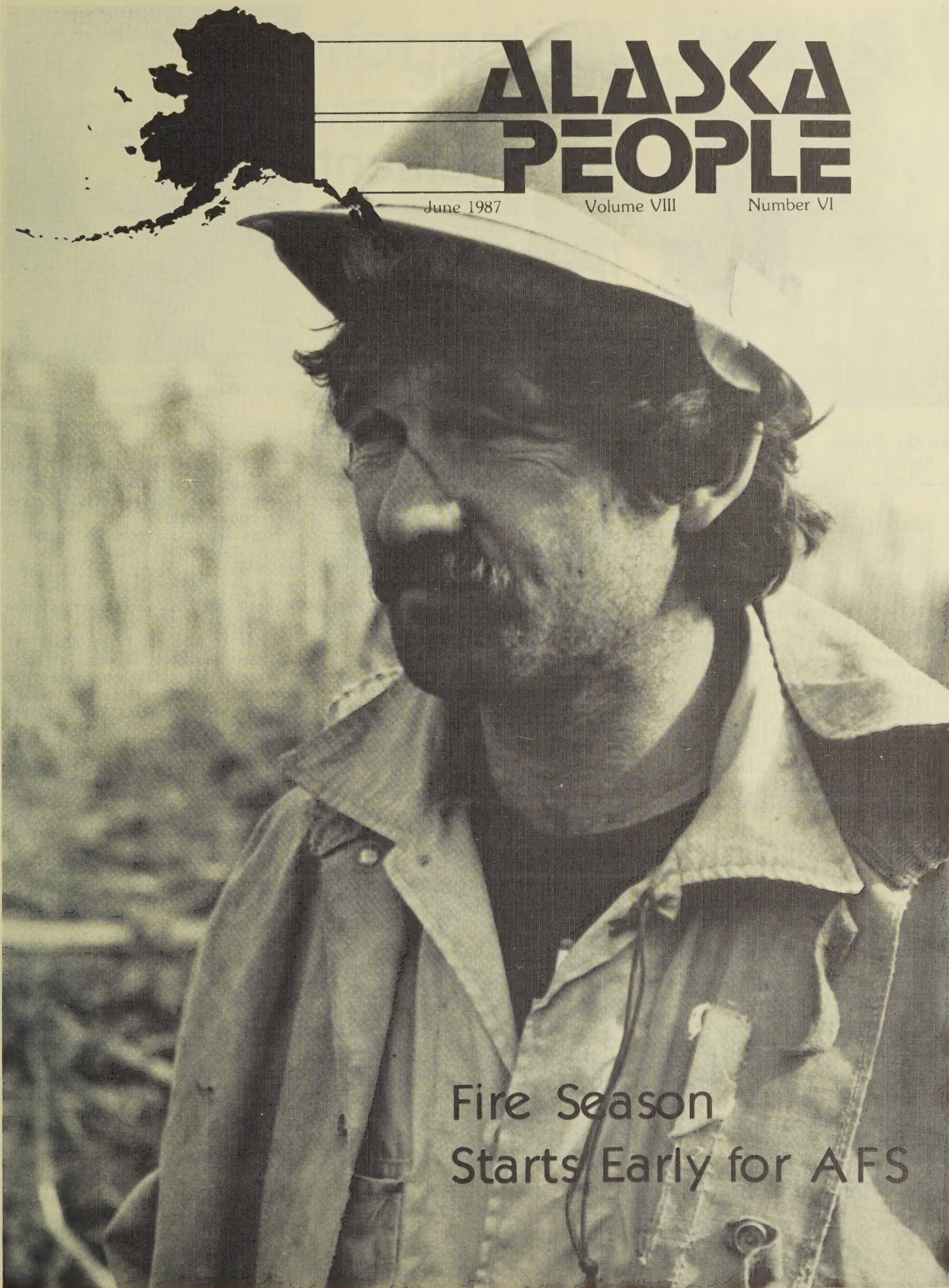


#1349246230

ID: 89078375

BLM/AL/AL-002 1120 912

HD
170
.A43
V.8
No.6



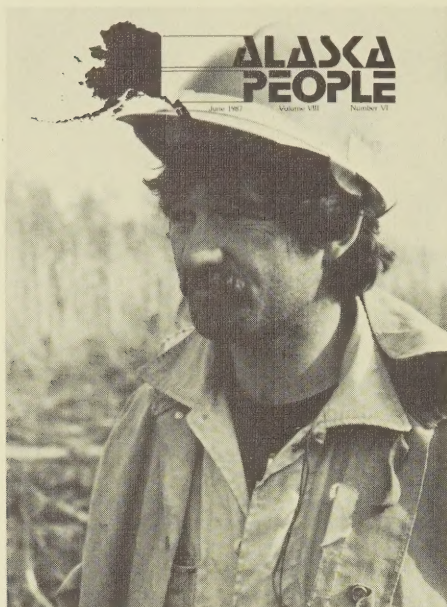
ALASKA PEOPLE

June 1987

Volume VIII

Number VI

Fire Season
Starts Early for AFS



On the Cover:

Alaska Fire Service hotshot Jerry Soard takes a break from fighting fire.

On May 22, a wildfire near Delta Junction caught everyone by surprise. Fanned by high winds, the fire doubled in size from 15,000 to 30,000 acres in 24 hours, threatening private structures, Ft. Greely, and the Alaska Highway.

AFS sprung into action, sending out a Class II overhead team. At the height of the fire, 641 people from the BLM, state, military and volunteer fire departments, and concerned citizens battled the blaze. Fire crews worked around the clock to contain the fire, which burned 43,000 acres and was finally contained May 28 and controlled June 3.

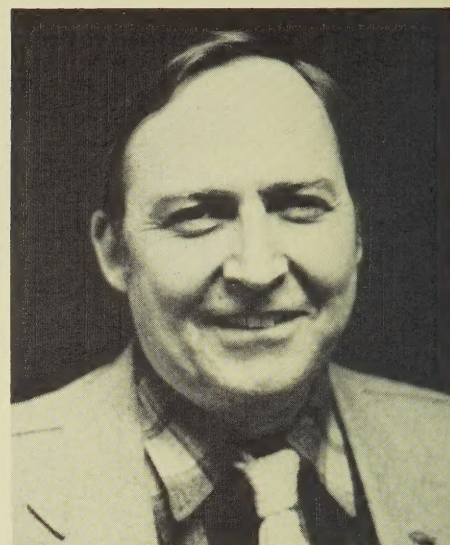
ALASKA PEOPLE is published monthly for the employees of the Bureau of Land Management and distributed statewide. It is produced by the Public Affairs Staff, Alaska State Office, 701 C Street, Box 13, Anchorage, Alaska 99513. Phone (907) 271-5555.

Joette Storm, acting Chief, Public Affairs
Tricia Hogervorst-Rukke, Writer/Editor/
Photographer
Valerie Arruda, Editorial Assistant
Danielle Allen, Illustrator



Meet the Management Team

Each month ALASKA PEOPLE is featuring one member of the Alaska BLM Management Team. This month's interview is with Dave Vickery, the new chief of public affairs.



David Vickery

An avid outdoor enthusiast, Alaska's new public affairs chief Dave Vickery says, "My family and I couldn't wait to come to Alaska. My wife, Linda, and I both love to hunt and fish. We are really looking forward to getting established in the state."

Vickery comes to Alaska BLM from Washington, D.C., where he has been assistant chief of public affairs since 1985.

Born in Bridger, Mont., in 1945, and raised in Billings, Vickery calls himself an ageing baby boomer. After graduating from high school he joined the Navy. "I served aboard the USS Currituck out of San Diego, then was transferred to a Naval hospital south of DaNang, Vietnam. After getting out of the military I attended Eastern Montana College in Billings for a year before going to CIA Broadcasting College in Colorado Springs."

The next 13 years were spent working as a reporter for radio and television stations in Colorado, Montana and North Dakota. "I did quite

a bit of investigative reporting," says Vickery. At the same time he continued working toward degrees in history and mass communications.

While working at a radio station in Hardin, Mont., in 1969, he met a "Norwegian farm girl from North Dakota." Linda taught English at Hardin High. They were married a few months later.

Vickery joined the staff of Congressman Ron Marlenee in 1979, directing the field operations in Montana. In 1981 he became assistant chief of public affairs for the Montana (BLM) State Office. In 1985 he went to Washington.

The Vickerys have two sons, John (12) and Eric (11), and a daughter, Bryn (6). "We all love to camp," says Vickery. "I enjoy working with my short wave radio and collecting guns, and I'm an omnivorous reader." The Vickery family has been actively involved in church activities and looks forward to becoming involved in a church in the Anchorage area. □

Buy U.S. Savings Bonds

Support the 1987 U.S. Savings Bond Campaign during the months of May and June. The bonds are currently paying 6.06 percent annual interest. The interest rate for savings bonds may change every six months (May and November) depending on market rates and has a guaranteed minimum rate of 6 percent.

You must hold the bonds for five years to get the maximum rates. They can be easily purchased through the payroll savings program. Bonds are considered a safe secure investment because they have the full backing of the U.S. Government.

Rice Wins Information Resources Management Award

Docket supervisor Heather Rice was named this year's winner of the *Information Resources Management 1987 Professional Service Award* for her work in adapting a bar code system to the Docket casefiles.

Rice, who competed against federal, state, municipal, private and nonprofit group nominees, said, "I am really thrilled." The Bureau sent her to Washington, D.C., to receive the award at the Resource Management Conference on June 8-10.

Since becoming chief of Docket, within the Branch of Land Office Services, she has converted a system of rolodex files, log books, transfer slips and charge out cards for 125,000 casefiles to a bar code system.

The system developed by Rice utilizes a Wang computer. The total system installation cost including supplies and first-year computer and printer maintenance was \$22,023. It produced a gross savings for the Alaska State Office of \$280,503 in the 10-month period since it was activated. The



Heather Rice

projected six-year equipment and maintenance expenditure for the system is \$23,023 for which the six year cost saving projection is \$2,511,666.

Besides reduced costs, there has been an 80 percent overall increase in efficiency with which the Docket services are delivered. The new system completes casefile sign out and return actions in approximately two seconds per transaction, allows immediate accountability and casefile location, and also allows system access to adjudicative areas in order to record staff casefile transfer actions. The system has reduced the Docket staff by two positions and allows for the elimination of an additional position in the near future.

The Docket Unit in the Fairbanks Support Center has recently installed the Automated Casefile Tracking System; and it is in the process of being installed in the California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico state offices, as well as the Denver Service Center and Tulsa District Office. □

by Danielle Allen

Trash, trash everywhere? That wasn't the case for BLMers participating in this year's Clean Up Day. Practically all the employees at BLM's Campbell Tract were out scouring the area and East 68th Street picking up trash, but there wasn't much to be found. Despite the great weather which Support Services clerical assistant Brenda Felchin says encouraged people to be out there, the five-ton truck normally packed to the brim in previous years went to the dump half full. The clean up is a tradition at the Campbell Tract and warehouse leader Bucky Blankinship says, "There just wasn't much trash this year."

This year was the first time for State Office BLMers to participate. Although their numbers were small, spirits were high. Land law examiner Jesse Hicks says, "I felt like an Anchorage citizen doing my part — cleaning up my own backyard."

After working a stretch of A Street from Ninth Avenue to the Ben Boeke arena, eight workers filled about 30 bags of litter. "We also found a 55-gallon drum, a wrought iron railing and a car bumper to fill a one-ton truck," says clean up organizer Ed Bovy. □

Where's the Trash?



Beverly Madding found her share of trash along E. 68th Street.

Ralph Basner was pleased with a car bumper he found downtown.



Alaska Fire Service's Handline Experts: The Hot Shots

AFS's Chena and Midnight Sun Interagency Hotshot Crews are usually found in the most critical areas of a fire. They are the handline experts, constructing fireline in difficult areas to contain fire spread. They are also specialized in back firing (setting fires along the inner edge of a fire control line to consume unburned fuel) and prescribed burning, (purposely burning an area to improve habitat). Being a member of the Chena or Midnight Sun Hotshots requires fire fighting skill and expertise.

"We look for people who have had previous fire fighting experience, are physically fit and who can work well as part of a team," says Chena Hotshot Crew Superintendent Jon Larson. "There's a strong esprit de corps among a hotshot crew. We push each other and help each other. When you're really clicking as a crew, it's a very special feeling. That's what we all strive for." Often working in the most dangerous areas of the fire, it is critical that crew members watch out for each other and are prepared to respond properly in emergency situations.

The Chena and Midnight Sun Hotshots are AFS's experts in building handline, back firing, and prescribed burning.

Hotshots stand out from emergency fire fighting crews in that they are regular government employees and are highly disciplined crews working together for an entire fire season. "There are very good reasons for doing everything in a line order," explains Larson. Two primary reasons are safety and efficiency. "In dangerous situations

we know the locations of all crew members and have communication established with each of them. Rather than having everyone scattered and trying to get information to the other crew members, information is passed efficiently and safely up and down the line."

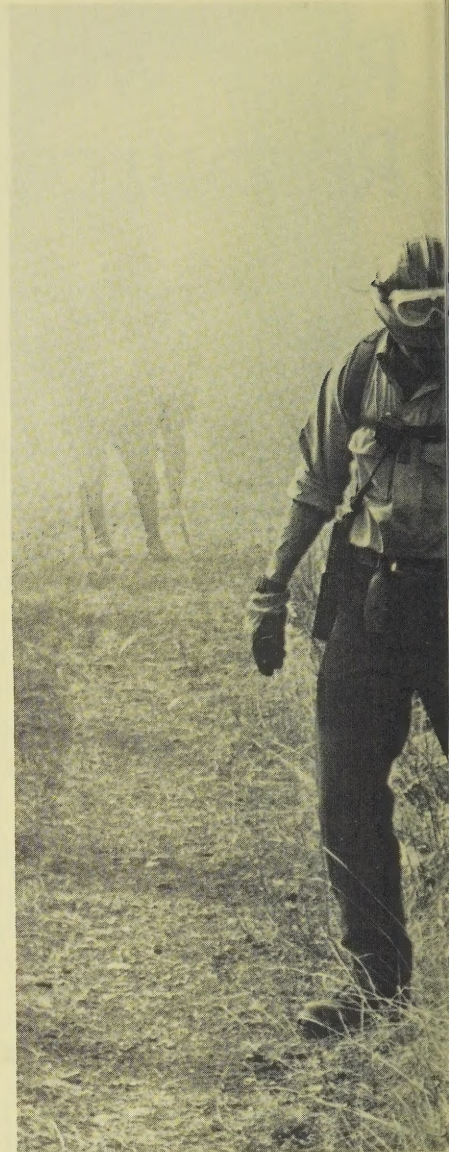
Each person has a specialty within the crew; and the crew itself is designed to change configurations, enabling them to respond effectively to different fire situations.

"As a hotshot I've been on fire assignments coast to coast...I've seen places I never would have seen any other way."

Jon Larson

Sawyers and swamper use chainsaws to clear a canopy fuel break by removing trees and brush. Next follow combinations of chopping and scraping tools which remove surface and ground fuels to mineral soil or permafrost. Each crew member has a specific job which ensures properly completed handline. Crew supervisors assess the fire situation, locate safety zones and ensure crew production, efficiency and quality control.

Crew members come from all over the U.S. During the first two weeks of the season, three hours a day is spent in rigorous physical training (PT), rounded out with classroom fire training the rest of the time. After weeks of conditioning, PT is reduced to one and a half hours a day when not on fire assignment.



This year an exchange program has been worked out between AFS and the U.S. Forest Service. The Mendocino Hotshots arrived at AFS on June 8 to help out during the busiest part of Alaska's fire season. Later in the summer the Chena Hotshots will be detailed to the Shasta Trinity National Forest to help out.

The crew member's backgrounds vary. Some work in the summer to earn money for college or are college graduates working seasonally to gain experience. Others may work seasonal jobs year-round, going from being a hotshot in the summer to working in a ski resort in the winter. Still others may spend their winters travelling.

The work is tough and the hours are long. An entry level hotshot starts as a



GS-3; experienced hotshots are hired as GS-4s. "The overtime is one of the things that makes the job worthwhile," says Larson. It helps offset the personal sacrifices involved such as loss of personal freedom, arduous working and living conditions and prolonged periods in the field.

The traveling is also appealing. "I've been a firefighter for 16 years," says Larson. "As a hotshot I've been on fire assignments coast to coast, from Florida to Alaska. I've seen places I never would have seen any other way. Never knowing where you may be from one day to the next is part of the intrigue. And, of course, we always want to be where the action is!" □

Fire Familiarization Crew Gets Down and Dirty

The Fire Familiarization Program (FFP) crew got the chance to dig line and get dirty at the Delta Junction fire. Trained in basic fire fighting at AFS in April, this was the first chance the crew had to test their training.

"All the fire people we worked with were really friendly and helpful," says land law examiner Chris Sitbon. "It was a nice change from working at a desk. I enjoyed getting some different experience."

"Having the opportunity to work together as a team and to enhance my knowledge of fire fighting was great," says land law examiner Mike Haskins.

Conceived in 1985, the Fire Familiarization Program is designed to acquaint younger natural resource personnel with the basics of fire suppression. It was created with the thought that if and when such personnel moved into the management ranks, especially line management, familiarity with fire would be valuable.

Thirty-seven people applied to get into the program in 1986, and thirteen people were selected. This year eight people were chosen. □



The Fire Familiarization Crew: (left to right) Ed Gallagher (AFS crew boss), Mark LaPine (Eugene, Ore.), Dave Mabraten (ASO), Martin Hansen (ADO), Val Romanello (AFS crew boss trainee), Kevin Meyer (ADO), John Rego (Glennallen), Steve Storrow (Eugene, Ore.), Chris Sitbon (ASO), Mike Haskens (ASO), Mark Wilkening (Eugene, Ore.)



Meet Volunteer Julene Seese

In the coming months ALASKA PEOPLE will be introducing you to some of the people volunteering for BLM in Alaska. This month, meet Julene Seese.

Julene Seese has been volunteering for BLM since April. "I spent the first two weeks in cadastral's cartography, section and the next month helping out in Office Services and the Print Shop; now I'm volunteering in public affairs," says Seese. "I've really enjoyed meeting new people and picking up new skills."

Raised in Anchorage, Seese has a degree in interior design from Washington State University in Pullman. She married while in college and started a family soon after graduation.

"In between raising kids, I made use of my skills by designing floor plans for 12 condos we were building. I also did the interior designing for several houses we fixed up and helped with the interior design of the Downtown Deli."

Why is she volunteering for BLM? "After several years of commission selling, I'm looking for a more secure job," she says. Seese has three children — Guy (16), Jay (14) and Amy (12). Her hobbies include singing (she is a past member of the Sweet Adelines) and drawing caricatures. □

Recruitment Programs

by Mary Zeiher

Has anyone ever asked you how to get a federal job? Could you explain how jobs get filled? You probably told them to fill out a 171 but "don't get your hopes up".

But did you know that there are a variety of programs that provide management flexibility in staffing positions and allow for developmental entry into the federal workforce. Recruitment timeframes for these programs are often shorter than vacancy announcements and can be targeted to meet special needs or affirmative action goals established by the agency.

Cooperative Education programs can be used to fill positions from entry level to professional. The baccalaureate program is the most familiar and most applicable to a majority of BLM job series. Students pursuing a graduate or an associate degree, or even students pursuing a high school diploma may be eligible for one of the cooperative education assignments.

Before students can participate, a formal agreement must be developed with the school. Often, completion of the program requirements will lead to a permanent position.

The **Handicapped Program** provides employment opportunities and training to the physically and mentally disabled. Regulations provide for an initial 700 hours appointment to assess the skills and capabilities of the employee. Those people who are severely physically disabled may be placed on a two-year appointment which can be converted to permanent.

Veteran's Readjustment Appointment is a noncompetitive appointment which leads to competitive status upon satisfactory completion of a two-year trial appointment that includes training. To be eligible, the veteran must (1) have served in active duty for more than 180 days, any part of which was during the Vietnam Era (8/5/64 to 5/7/75), or have been released from active duty for a service-connected disability with any part of the active duty during the Vietnam Era; (2) be a U.S. citizen; and (3) have completed no more than 14 years of education (nondisabled veterans). Initial appointments are limited to GS/WG-9 and below.

30% Compensable Veteran Appointment allows veterans who have been rated as having compensable service-connected disabilities of 30 percent or more to be selected noncompetitively for temporary limited appointments for positions for which they are qualified. After an initial temporary appointment, the employee is eligible for noncompetitive conversion to the permanent work force.

Job Site Placement provides opportunities to candidates referred by placement coordinators such as the Cook Inlet Native Association Job Club, Alaska Division of Vocation Rehabilitation, Veterans Administration or special education programs. Candidates are considered volunteers and are assessed for job readiness by the agency making the placement.

This is a small sampling of the programs available. If you would like additional information, please contact Sheila Brown, 271-3758; Sandy Lopez, 271-3159; or Mary Zeiher 271-3180 in the Branch of Human Resources. □

Available Conference Rooms

With all the name changes and the reorganizing, here's a list of the new conference rooms available:

Fourth floor:

Yukon Room - Module E, Room 434, call 5047 to reserve.

John's Old Office - Module D, call 5768 to reserve.

Resources Conference Room - Module F, call 5477 to reserve.

Denali Room - Module E, call 3173 to reserve.

Fifth floor:

Nanook Room - Module E, Room 574, Call 5057 to reserve.



Uniform: UPDATE

Considerable progress has been made in selecting an official BLM uniform. The Washington Office called for proposals in May and hopes to award a contract by September. A catalog containing uniform items should be out by the first of next year. Until that time the management team has agreed to establish an interim uniform policy which will provide employees some standard for the 1987 field season.

Who Should Wear the Uniform

Employees who should wear uniforms include those who are highly visible to the public during a major part of the work day (e.g., receptionists, public contact specialists); perform duties of a formal ceremonial nature requiring the uniform for identification with the BLM (area managers); represent the BLM in public, education, information or recruitment events; or participate in search and rescue and other emergency operations.

Types of Uniforms Currently there are two types of uniforms authorized in BLM Alaska.

1) Field uniforms — worn on patrol, when meeting the public or when representing BLM in field situations.

2) Work uniforms — worn when performing maintenance or construction work, or on assignments such as search and rescue and inventories. The work uniform is appropriate for most field work involving limited public contact.

Both types consist of chocolate brown slacks and a silver-tan shirt.

Uniform Allowance

Department Manual 334 authorizes a maximum annual allowance (either initial or replacement) of \$125 to each employee who is required to wear a uniform while performing official duties. Maintaining the uniform is the employee's responsibility.

Three Steps to Ordering a Uniform:

Step 1: Have your supervisor fill out a *Request and Authorization for Uniform*

Allowance form.

Step 2: Send the signed request to Carol Petersen (974) in Anchorage or Fran Goen (975) in Fairbanks. The form will be forwarded to Denver where a check for \$60 (the maximum allowance for this year) will be issued to you as reimbursement for your uniform expenditures.

Step 3: Once your form has been forwarded to Denver, you can order two uniform shirts from:

Alaska Textiles
610 Fireweed Lane
Anchorage
phone: 265-4880

The order takes about ten days.

A professional appearance is important to the development of an *esprit d'corps* as well as to the enhancement of BLM's image. Those employees who wear the uniform are expected to maintain it to an acceptable standard. Employees who are not required to wear a uniform may do so at their own expense. □



Goldpanning has always been one of the favorite stations at Outdoor Week.

Kids Learn at Tract

by Danielle Allen

For 1,750 sixth graders, a day at Outdoor Week was a great way to end the school year. From May 11-14 students panned for gold, tested the water quality of the Campbell Creek and learned about natural resources in a classroom set out-of-doors at the Campbell Tract.

BLM employees and other federal, state and municipal agencies provided instruction and resources for the annual event. Anchorage District realty

specialist Bill Brown taught map and compass skills while ADO archaeologist Julie Steele gave a presentation on archaeology. ADO wildlife biologist Van Waggoner shared coordination responsibilities with Emma Walton from the Anchorage School District.

The school district and BLM have coordinated the program, and our newly-appointed Associate State Director, Les Rosenkrance, can be credited for its conception more than 12 years ago. □

WELCOME ABOARD May 1987

Phyllis Kanyer, Cartographic Technician,
ASO Division of Support Services
Bill Hale, Cartographic Technician, ASO
Division of Support Services
Susan Lavin, Land Law Examiner, ASO
Division of Lands & Renewable
Resources
Micky Nelson, Forestry Technician
(smokejumper), AFS
Lynda Purvis, Cartographic Technician,
ASO Division of Cadastral Survey

MOVING ON May 1987

Kathy Wyckoff, Miscellaneous
Documents Examiner, ASO Division
of Conveyance Management
Lynette Husfelt, Miscellaneous
Documents Examiner, ASO Division
of Conveyance Management
Patsy Pearson, Land Law Examiner, ASO
Division of Conveyance Management
Bob Stroud, Sr., Maintenance Mechanic,
AFS
Kitty Crawford, Supervisory Land Law
Examiner, Anchorage District
Douglas Dilts, Cartographic Technician,
ASO Division of Support Services
Mike Goings, Secretary, ADO Division
of Mineral Resources
Don Leach, Land Law Examiner,
Fairbanks Support Center
Ann Lowe, Secretary, Fairbanks Support
Center
Ramona Mierzejewski, Librarian, Alaska
Resources Library
Ethelyn Taylor, Contact Representative,
ASO Division of Support Services

George Gurr, Chief, ASO Public Affairs,
(retired)
Sal DeLeonardis, Alaska Land Use
Council Representative, ASO Office of
Management, Planning and Budget,
(retired)
Louise Todd, Administrative Officer,
Anchorage District Office (retired)

Todd Checks Out



Louise Todd

by Danielle Allen

After more than 30 years of government service, one of the Anchorage District's favorite administrative officers retired June 1. Louise Todd came from the Baker (Oregon) District Office to the Anchorage District in 1977 to beat 60

other applicants for her GS-7/9/11 job. For the next 10 years district employees marveled at the efficient, organized and meticulous Todd. Being one of seven children, she grew up that way.

A child of the Depression, Todd had her hard-working mother as an example. Her mom was the family's sole support when her father died. "I learned how to work from my mom," says Todd, and she grew accustomed to hard times. "I don't know if it's good or not, but I've never learned how to relax — I can't relax."

Educated in a Catholic school, Todd was encouraged to pursue traditional female professions. "My mom told me I should learn to type and take secretarial courses. It never occurred to me that I would do anything else."

A 90-day temporary clerk job with the BLM Baker office in 1957 began her government career.

As the small office grew to handle multiple resource programs, so did Todd's advancement. She advanced from a GS-3 clerk-stenographer to district clerk and then to a GS-6 clerical assistant after the district manager fought to have her position upgraded.

Todd, a widow, returns to Baker, Ore., this month where her two sons and many friends live. She will redirect her energies from personnel, records, training and other administrative responsibilities to activities of leisure. "I'll take up those things I used to do such as sewing, playing bridge and visiting family and old friends," says Todd. □

PUBLIC LANDS USA ☆ **USE** ☆ **SHARE** ☆ **APPRECIATE**

Bureau of Land Management
701 C Street, Box 13
Anchorage, Alaska 99513

Return if not delivered in 10 days
OFFICIAL BUSINESS, Penalty for Private Use \$300



BLM Library
Denver Federal Center
Bldg. 50, OC-521
P.O. Box 25047
Denver, CO 80225

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
U.S. DEPARTMENT
OF THE INTERIOR
INT 415

